



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/776,453	02/12/2004	Lynn Noble	034017R015	3598

441 7590 12/21/2005

SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL, LLP
1850 M STREET, N.W., SUITE 800
WASHINGTON, DC 20036

EXAMINER

WEEKS, GLORIA R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3721

DATE MAILED: 12/21/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/776,453	Applicant(s) NOBLE, LYNN	
	Examiner Gloria R. Weeks	Art Unit 3721	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 September 2005.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**.
- 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-3, 5-22 and 24-35 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1, 2, 7-22, 24-30 and 33-35 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 3, 5, 6 and 32 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 09 August 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 - 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to Applicants' amendments and arguments received on September 26, 2005, all of which have been considered and acknowledged in this action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 15, 17-19, 27, 28, 34 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 15 recites the limitations "said rod" in line 9 and "said biasing device in line 11.

There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 17 recites the limitations "said rod" in line 10 and "said biasing device in line 11.

There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 18 recites the limitation "said biasing device" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 27 recites the limitation "said transmission" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

Art Unit: 3721

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1, 7-11 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Klinkel et al. (USPN 4,757,668).

Regarding claims 1 and 7-11, Klinkel et al. discloses an end sealer shifting assembly comprising: a cam transmission (76) including a roller (82) in engagement with the outer peripheral edge of the cam (76) and in driving communication with a push rod assembly (80, 97-102); the push rod assembly (80, 97-102) driven by the transmission (76), the push rod assembly comprising a rod (80) with a first end received by a end seal compression jaw (43, 87) and a second end received by the roller (82); the end seal compression jaw (43, 87) in driving engagement with the push rod assembly (80, 97-102); compliance means including a spring (89) biasing the jaw (87) towards a contact member (40, 87).

With respect to claim 15, Klinkel et al. discloses an end sealer shifting assembly comprising: a transmission (76) in driving communication with a push rod assembly (80, 97-102); an end seal compression jaw (43, 87) (43, 87) in driving engagement with the push rod assembly (80, 97-102); compliance means including a first spring (89) biasing the jaw (87) towards a contact member (40, 87) and a second spring (79) positioned so as to bias a rod (80) of the push rod assembly (80, 97-102) toward the transmission (76).

6. Claims 1, 2, 12, 16, 20, 21, 29, 30 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fowler et al. (USPN 5,284,002).

Regarding claims 1, 2 and 12, Fowler et al. discloses a transmission (not shown; column 8 line 55); spring compliance means including a first and second spring (194) for compliance

Art Unit: 3721

between an end seal compression jaw (163, 165) and a contact member (164, 166) when the jaw is driven into a compression relationship with the contact member (164, 166); a push rod assembly including a push rod (184, 215) driven by the transmission, wherein the push rod (184) receives the end seal compression jaw (163, 165) that is compliance adjustable relative to a first end (adjacent 194; figure 9) of the push rod (184) received by the jaw (163, 165); a reception sleeve (183) receiving the push rod (184).

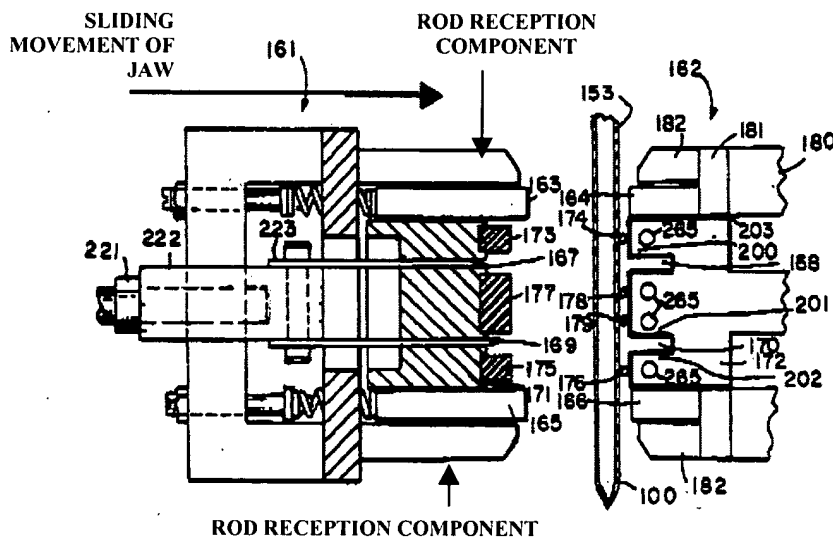
With respect to claims 1, 16 and 20, Fowler et al. discloses a transmission (not shown; column 8 line 55); compliance means including for compliance between an end seal compression jaw (163, 165) and a heated (174, 178, 179) second jaw (164, 166, 200, 201, 202) when the end seal compression jaw is driven into a compression relationship with the second jaw (164, 166), and a position restrictor device (183) having an interior contact portion that guides a push rod assembly (184, 215); the push rod assembly including a push rod (184, 215) driven by the transmission, wherein the push rod (184) receives the end seal compression jaw (163, 165) that is compliance adjustable relative to a first end (adjacent 194; figure 9) of the push rod (184) received by the jaw (163, 165).

In reference to claims 1, 21 and 33, Fowler et al. discloses a transmission (not shown; column 8 line 55); spring compliance means (194) for compliance between an end seal compression jaw (163, 165) and a contact member (164, 166) when the jaw (163, 165) is driven into a compression relationship with the contact member (164, 166), and a casing (183) receiving a push rod assembly (184, 215); the push rod assembly including a rods (184) driven by the transmission, wherein the push rods (184) receive the end seal compression jaw (163, 165) that is compliance adjustable relative to a first end (adjacent 194; figure 9) of the push rod (184)

Art Unit: 3721

received by the jaw (163, 165); the push rod assembly further including a pair of rods (215) in engagement with opposite ends of the jaw (163, 165), wherein the rods (215) are axially adjustable (via 184) relative to the casing (183).

With respect to claims 29, Fowler et al. discloses a method of manufacturing an end sealer shifting assembly comprising the step of: providing a transmission (not shown; column 8 line 55); providing an end seal compression jaw (163, 165) in engagement with the transmission, wherein the jaw (163, 165) slidably receives a rod reception component (; providing compliance means (194) for jaw compliance with a contact member (164, 166) when the jaw (163, 165) is driven into compression relationship with the contact member, wherein the jaw comprises a block having a heater wire (174, 176, 178) compression surface (200, 201, 202).



Regarding claim 30, Fowler et al. discloses a method of forming an end seal in a bag dispensing system, comprising the steps of: feeding bag material (149) between an end seal compression jaw (163, 165) and a second jaw (164, 166); providing a contents (154, 157) to the

Art Unit: 3721

bag being formed; moving the end seal compression jaw (163, 165) toward the second jaw (164, 166); and compliance means (194) allowing the moving jaw (163, 165) to conform to any variations in relative to the flush contact of the end seal compression jaw (163, 165) with the second jaw (164, 166).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being obvious over Klinkel et al. (USPN 4,757,668).

With respect to claims 13 and 14, Klinkel et al. discloses an end sealer shifting assembly comprising: a transmission (76) in driving communication with a push rod assembly (80, 97-102); an end seal compression jaw (43, 87) (43, 87) in driving engagement with the push rod assembly (80, 97-102); compliance means including a first spring (89) and second spring (79) positioned at the push rod assembly (80, 97-102). Although neither of the spring constants are disclosed with respect to the first spring taught by Fowler et al and the second spring taught by Klinkel et al., It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to utilize springs of different spring constants, since Applicant has not disclosed that the difference in spring constants solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose and it appears that the invention would perform equally well with springs having the same spring constant. Examiner

Art Unit: 3721

has specifically reviewed page 46 of Applicant's specification, drawn to the first and second springs of Applicant's invention, and has been unable to determine a disclosed reason for the limitation of a first and second spring with different spring constants.

Furthermore, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have found it obvious to use springs of different spring constants as the first and second springs provide different functions in the end sealer shifting assembly.

9. Claims 17, 22, 25-28, 34 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fowler et al. (USPN 5,284,002) in view of Klinkel et al. (USPN 4,757,668).

In reference to claims 17 and 34, Fowler et al. discloses an end sealer shifting assembly comprising a transmission (not shown; column 8 line 55); a push rod assembly (184, 215) driven by the transmission; an end seal compression jaw (163, 165); compliance means for jaw compliance with a contact member (164, 166), wherein the compliance means includes a first and second nested¹ springs (194). Fowler does not disclose specific limitations of the driving or transmission means of the shifting assembly, yet states the push rod assembly (184) moves the jaw in and out of engagement with a contact member (164, 166).

Klinkel et al. teaches an end sealer shifting assembly comprising: a casing (98) fixed in position relative to a sealer frame structure (57), wherein a rod (97) is received within the casing (56) and in communication with a biasing device (79) such that the rod (97) is adjustable relative to the casing (57). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the compliance means of Fowler et al. to include the fixed casing of

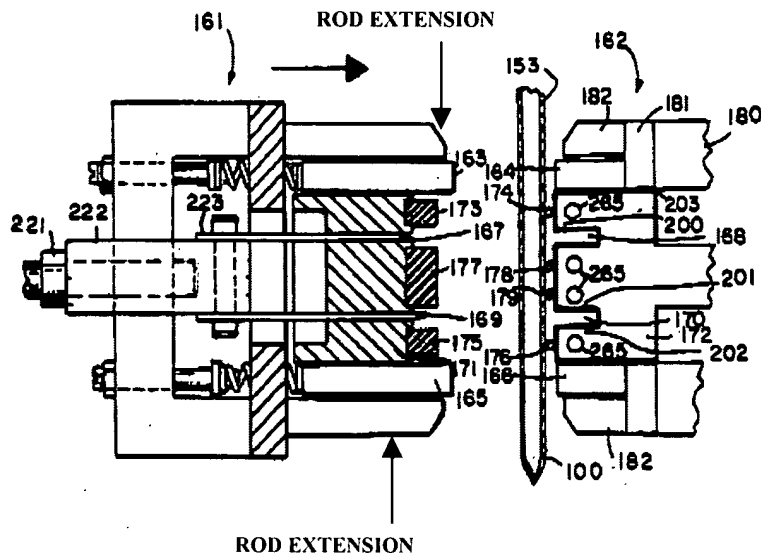
¹ Nested: A place affording snug refuge or lodging

Art Unit: 3721

Klinkel et al. for the purpose of guiding the rod assembly thereby allowing engagement and non-engagement positioning of the end seal compression jaw.

Regarding claims 22 and 24, Fowler et al. discloses a sealer compression jaw (164, 165); a rod assembly (184, 215) in driving engagement with the jaw (163, 165), wherein the jaw (163, 165) is in adjustable engagement with the rod assembly (184, 215) via a compliance bias spring (194); a transmission (not shown; column 8 line 55) in driving engagement with the rod assembly (184, 215); a housing block (183) which slidably receives the push rod assembly (184); and a rod extension (*shown below*) slidably received by the jaw (163, 165). Fowler et al. does not disclose the specifics of the transmission used to drive the rod assembly.

Klinkel et al. teaches an end sealer shifting assembly comprising: a sealer compression jaw (40); a rod assembly (97, 99, 100, 101, 102) in driving engagement with the jaw (40) and a cam member (76), wherein the jaw (40) is biased away from the cam member (76) by a compliance spring (79). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the transmission of Fowler et al. to include the bias spring and cam of Klinkel et al., since column 7 lines 15-39 of Klinkel et al. states that such a modification is known for providing synchronous and counteroperating movement of jaws of an end sealer shifting assembly. The end sealer shifting assembly of Fowler et al. as modified by Klinkel et al. would allow the first compliance bias spring (194 - Fowler et al.) taught by Fowler et al. to bias the jaw (163, 165 - Fowler et al.) away from the cam member, as Klinkel et al. illustrates that the jaw (163, 165 - Fowler et al.; 40 - Klinkel et al.) as the jaw would move along an axis (K - Klinkel et al.) away from the cam due to contact with a second jaw (164, 166 - Fowler et al.; 43 - Klinkel et al.).



With respect to claim 25, Fowler et al. discloses an end sealer shifting assembly comprising: a sealer compression jaw (164, 165) having a heater wire compression surface (173, 175, 177); a rod assembly (184, 215) in driving engagement with the jaw (163, 165), wherein the jaw (163, 165) is in adjustable engagement with the rod assembly (184, 215) via a compliance bias spring (194); a transmission (not shown; column 8 line 55) in driving engagement with the rod assembly (184, 215); wherein the jaw slidably receives an end of the rod (*shown above*) slidably received by the jaw (163, 165). Fowler et al. does not disclose the specifics of the transmission used to drive the rod assembly.

Klinkel et al. teaches an end sealer shifting assembly comprising: a sealer compression jaw (40); a rod assembly (97, 99, 100, 101, 102) in driving engagement with the jaw (40) and a cam member (76). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the transmission of Fowler et al. to include the cam of Klinkel et al., since column 7 lines 15-39 of Klinkel et al. states that such a modification is known for

Art Unit: 3721

providing synchronous and counteroperating movement of jaws of an end sealer shifting assembly.

In reference to claims 22 and 26, Fowler et al. discloses a sealer compression jaw (164, 165); a rod assembly (184, 215) in driving engagement with the jaw (163, 165), wherein the jaw (163, 165) is in adjustable engagement with the rod assembly (184, 215) via a compliance bias spring (194); a transmission (not shown; column 8 line 55) in driving engagement with the rod assembly (184, 215); a housing block (183) which slidingly receives the push rod assembly (184); and a rod extension (*shown above*) slidingly received by the jaw (163, 165). Fowler et al. does not disclose the specifics of the transmission used to drive the rod assembly.

Klinkel et al. teaches an end sealer shifting assembly comprising: a sealer compression jaw (40); a rod assembly (97, 99, 100, 101, 102) in driving engagement with the jaw (40) and a cam member (76), wherein the jaw (40) is biased away from the cam member (76) by a compliance spring (79). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the transmission of Fowler et al. to include the bias spring and cam of Klinkel et al., since column 7 lines 15-39 of Klinkel et al. states that such a modification is known for providing synchronous and counteroperating movement of jaws of an end sealer shifting assembly.

With respect to claims 22, 27, 28 and 35, Fowler et al. discloses a sealer compression jaw (164, 165); a rod assembly (184, 215) in driving engagement with the jaw (163, 165), wherein the jaw (163, 165) is in adjustable engagement with the rod assembly (184, 215) via a first nested² spring (194); a transmission (not shown; column 8 line 55) in driving engagement with

² Nested: A place affording snug refuge or lodging

Allowable Subject Matter

10. The indicated allowability of claims 13-15 are withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to Klinkel et al. (USPN 4,757,668). Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.

11. Claims 3, 5, 6, and 32 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In reference to claims 3 and 5, the following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: In light of the amendment filed on September 26, 2005 and further examination of the art of record, it has been decided that the art considered as a whole, alone or in combination, neither anticipates nor renders obvious the claimed method of manufacturing an end sealer shifting assembly comprising the step of providing a push rod having a first end in driving engagement with a jaw wherein the jaw is compliance adjustable relative to the first end of the push rod via a compliance spring, the compliance spring also biasing a reception sleeve which receives the push rod, for the purpose of accommodating some degree of forward and rearward play of both the end seal compression jaw and the push rod, thereby providing flush contact with an operationally fixed jaw.

With respect to claims 6 and 32, the following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: In light of the amendment filed on September 26, 2005 and further examination of the art of record, it has been decided that the art considered as a whole, alone or in combination, neither anticipates nor renders obvious the claimed method of manufacturing an end sealer shifting assembly comprising the step of providing a rod having in driving engagement with a

Art Unit: 3721

jaw, wherein the jaw has a cavity that receives an expanded extension of the rod, for the purpose of accommodating some degree of forward and rearward play of the end seal compression jaw, thereby providing flush contact with an operationally fixed jaw.

12. Claims 18 and 19 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

13. Applicant's arguments filed September 26, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-3, 5-12, 16, 20, 21, 30 and 33 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

14. Applicant's arguments, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 17-19 and 34 under 35 USC 102 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Klinkel et al. (USPN 4,757,668).

Conclusion

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gloria R. Weeks whose telephone number is (571) 272-4473.

The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 am - 7:00 pm Monday-Thursday.

Art Unit: 3721

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi I. Rada can be reached on (571) 272-4467. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

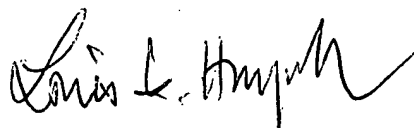
Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Gloria R Weeks
Examiner
Art Unit 3721



grw

December 14, 2005



LOUIS K. HUYNH
PRIMARY EXAMINER